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Bits 'o Verse

BY

Margaret Hamilton Alden

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Just Bits o' Verse; but if they chance to bring you
 You (to whom they come), a passing word of cheer,
Then, shall the simple songs I've tried to sing you
 Fulfill their Mission here.

—M. H. A.

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PANSIES

Pansies for thoughts—in coloring rich and tender (Royalty's colors
deep purple and pure gold)
And with them goes my prayer "May God defend her—friend of
my soul, and give her peace untold."
Tho' distance sever, thought all space o'er leaping, its loving watch
with you, dear heart, is keeping.

Words are so feeble, thoughts so deep and tender—Love is so
strong, and human hearts so weak;
And I who fain a greeting fit would send her, (my Star of Hope),
can find no words to speak;
Perhaps the pansies may my message hold—in royal purple clad,
with hearts of gold.

HOLLY

Of all Dame Nature's treasures, that bloom through out the year
In wealth she never measures—the Chief is surely here.

For e'en the Rose's splendor, that blooms in leafy June,
Holds not the mem'ries tender, to set our hearts in tune

That 'round the Holly lingers; and every Christmas-tide
'Tis as tho' fairy fingers had scattered far and wide

Its cheery sprays, to brighten our lives where'er we roam,
And all our cares to lighten, with thoughts of Home, sweet Home.

A PROMISE

A wee bird sat on a frosted bough
With ruffled plumage and drooping wing,
And I watched it—and thought "Its forgotten how
It used to *sing*
When the bough was pink, that is frosted now."

And I said "'twould be strange if a tiny bird
Should remember the blossoms of long ago,
Now the winter is here." Then the wee thing stirred,
And soft and low
Came the notes of a song, as tho' it heard.

And it seemed to say—"Tho the frost is here
And I sit in the cold with folded wing,
And the air is bleak and the winter drear,
Yet still the Spring
Shall come again, and the skies be clear."

And I sat rebuked that a little bird
Should teach a lesson I ought to have known;
And deep in my heart once more Faith stirred,
(I thought Her flown)
And *my* springtime came as its song I heard.

THE FOLLOWING OF THE STAR

In Bethlehem's Manger—long ago—a tiny Baby lay,
While in the sky a Star, aglow, made clear to all the Way
To find Him on His natal day.

So long ago—that Baby's birth within the Manger low:
And yet, each year, (o'er all the earth) the Star is still aglow
And shows each soul the Way to go.

O'er barren wastes, by night and day, the Wise men traveled far.
They found the Baby where He lay (they who had crossed the
desert's bar)

By trustful following of the Star.

Each year the Star shines out anew to guide us and to bless.
Each year there comes to me and you—garbed in familiar dress—
The only guide to Happiness.

'Twas "Peace on earth, Good-will to Men," how long ago and far!
And yet the Way lies clear as when the Three crossed o'er the
desert bar—

With patience following the Star.

O strife, and greed, and bitter hate! when will ye cease to mar
The pilgrim's way to Heaven's gate, where Peace and Love
Incarnate wait

The Following of the Star?

CASTLES IN THE AIR

"Castles in the Air"—who has not owned them?
(Fashioned with a grace beyond compare)
Who, within his heart has not enthroned them.
Visionary Castles in the Air?

There we keep our soul's most precious treasures
Free from sordid worldly strife and care;
Dreams no narrow earthly limit measures—
Safe within our Castles in the Air.

All the Hopes that came not to fruition
Here below, fulfill each promise there;
And no vain, unrealized ambition
Mocks us in our Castles in the Air.

There—the idols whom our hearts would cherish
(And whose loss we never learned to bear)
Wait, with beauty that shall never perish,
Shrined within our Castles in the Air.

When the world shall fade upon our vision
With its iron walls of grim despair—
We may find in emerald fields elysian
All our vanished Castles in the Air.

Azure skies starred o'er with gold, above us,
With a radiance earth scenes never wear;
Hearts we thought estranged once more shall love us
When we reach our Castles in the Air.

Then, perchance, we'll find what seemed ideal,
(Noble thoughts, and deeds we fain would dare
Aims and hopes that mocked us here) are real
In our glorious Castles in the Air.

While the life within our earthly prison
Was a hideous dream of sin and care,
From which we at last have waked, and risen
To our Own—our Castles in the Air.

OUR MOTTO—M. W. P. A.

"Let us put down self—and work for a Cause!"
How glibly we talk of our "motto"—and say
"How wondrous its meaning"—and then do we pause
Resolving to put it in practice *today*?
To put down self—and work for a cause

Unmindful of critics, of praise or of blame,
Determined to follow the Spirit, whose laws
Mean more than the letter, *far* more than the Name,
Do we do it? or do we go on feeling quite
Content of the *letter* we seem to respect?
Ignoring the spirit? if so, by what right
Do we claim for our standard that which we reject?

Of course it *costs* something to work for a cause,
Costs comfort, costs prestige, costs sometimes a life;
Brings heartache and sorrow, finds error and flaws
In those whom we trusted, brings trouble and strife;
But, those who have added to progress and worth,
Who have guided the world—nor found time to pause
For praise or for censure—the *great* ones of earth—
Have lived not for *self*, but have "worked for a Cause."

TEDDY

Just a little Laddie, with a head of sunny curls,
Eyes alight with mischief, teeth like rows of pearls;
Full of life and vigor, with a brain that never tires
Of inventing some new method of obtaining his desires—
That's Teddy.

Just a wondering Baby—trying hard to understand
What the grown folk are meaning (stranger in a foreign land)!
He's only four, and *that* is not an age of wisdom keen,
His eyes have yet to open on mysteries unseen;
Poor Teddy!

Little feet that still must journey many a weary mile;
Little face one day to lose its trusting baby smile;
What are we, who long have trodden this old earth's rugged way
Doing to make smooth the road and straight the path today
For Teddy?

How are we—who many times have conned our lessons o'er—
Helping to interpret life's strange and mystic lore
For the eager little Learners who have only just *begun*
To enter on the journey leading towards the setting sun
Like Teddy?

Are we offering but a stone when they cry for bread?
De we, (all unheeding) forget His words who said
(As long ago He walked beside the Lake of Galilee)
"Forbid them not, the Little Ones, from coming unto Me"
As Teddy?

Are we *not* keeping them from Him when we fold our hands,
Forgetting that each little soul who on life's threshold stands
Is waiting for the guidance which only they can give
Who have learned from hard experience just what it means to live?
And Teddy.

How shall Teddy judge us, when to man's stature grown
He measures up the "might have been"—the things he should have
known—
If we, who held the keys that would have opened wide the door
To Knowledge and to Liberty, had done our duty more
By Teddy?

And when we stand at the last day before the Judge of all
Who knows us, (as we are) and heeds the weakest sparrow's fall,
What shall we, who had the power to make straight the crooked way
For all Christ's "little ones" on earth—what shall we find to *say*
To Teddy?

WHEN I'M A MAN

"When I'm a Man," he said, and his eyes of deepest blue
Would glow with fervor true, and he'd shake his golden head;
"I'll do such things for you, when I'm a *Man*"—my wee boy said.

"When I'm a Man," he said, "You'll have such heaps of gold
More than your hands can hold; and it's you I'm going to wed,
And you shall not grow old, when I'm a *Man*"—my wee boy said.

"When I'm a Man," he said—How short a time it seems!
And now the sunlight gleams on my darling's lowly bed,
And I only hear in dreams how "When I'm a *Man*," he said.

"When I'm a *Man*," he said, "You'll have such heaps of gold!"
Now all my poor hands hold is the tress from his sunny head;
And my *heart* has grown old—he is not here who said—"When
I'm a *Man*."

TRANSITION

I was hopeless and despairing—and life looked dark indeed—

And my heart felt heavy in my breast

As I mused upon the selfishness, the treachery, and greed

By which my fellow creatures seem possessed;

And not a gleam of brightness my weary soul beguiled,

The earth seemed filled with darkness and despair;

When a Baby, passing by, looked into my face and smiled,

While its silvery laugh rang out upon the air.

Just a Baby's smile! but it changed the world for me,

And my heart grew lighter in my breast;

For in those laughing eyes I once more seemed to see

Those other eyes (closed long ago, in rest)

Which I had loved so dearly when the world was bright and fair,

And all my fellow men were good and true,

The eyes of my own Baby, who is safe from sin and care,

In God's unknown land beyond the Blue.

Then—in the Light reflected from that Baby's cheery smile

My heart that had so long been hard and cold

Reproved me, for condemning my fellowmen—the while

I, too, was striving hard for gain and gold;

And the clear eyes of my Baby—full of innocence and trust—

Looked at me, from the stranger Baby face,

And the little hands that long ago had crumbled into dust

Seemed to beckon from their old familiar place;

And the skies were not so clouded, and life looked not so dark,

And my lonely heart was filled again with peace,

As the sweet voice of my Baby—like the warble of a lark—

Seemed to bid all wrath and bitterness to cease;

While, as of old, my fellowmen again were good and true,

As my soul to nobler feeling was beguiled

By the Message sent to me, from Him who reigns above the Blue,

Through the smile of a little stranger child.

MOTHER'S WORLD

Eyes of blue and hair of gold,

Cheeks all brown with summer tan,

Lips that much of laughter hold,

That is Mother's Little Man!

Shining curls like chestnut's brown,

Long-lashed eyes, demure and staid,

Sweetest face in all the town,

That is Mother's Little Maid!

Dainty room with snow-white beds,

Where (like flowers with petals curled,)

Rest in peace two dreaming heads,

That is Mother's Little World.

THE BABY'S ANSWER

Dear little lad with the bonny eyes
And sunny golden hair,
Sweet and winsome and wondrous wise
(For all your baby air)
Why did God send you down to earth
From the land so far above?
What was the Thought that gave you birth?
The baby answers,—“Love.”

Dear little lad with the eyes of brown
And hair of deepest gold,
When first you came from Heaven down,
What did your wee hands hold?
What was the Gift you brought to earth
From your home in the skies above,
When you came to this, your latest birth?
The Baby answers, “Love.”

Dear little lad with hair of gold
And shining eyes of brown,
What is your Work in this world so old?
Why did God send you down?
What will you do when you grow a man,
(Tiny spark from the Life above)
How will you meet your Maker's plan?
The Baby answers, “Love.”

THE BABY IN MY ARMS

When the world seems full of trouble and life looks hard and cold,
And my courage is at ebb-tide and I fear I'm growing old,
And life's daily grind and hurry sometimes make me forget
That the purest joys are found apart from all its jar and fret;
Then I sit down in the silence, and I banish all alarms
With the touch of tiny fingers of the Baby in my arms;
The clasping, clinging fingers of the Baby in my arms.

He's just a dimpled darling with eyes of deepest blue,
And his cheeks are like the roses that are fragrant with the dew,
And his laugh is like the music that filters thro' the air
When they say the benediction that follows after prayer;
And I feel there is no danger but will flee before the charms
Of the sweet and silvery laughter of the Baby in my arms;
The clear and joyous laughter of the Baby in my arms.

You may talk of fame and glory, of wealth and pomp and power!
I would not give my Baby for any earthly dower.
And *money* has no brightness that ever can compare
With the pure and shining beauty of my darling's golden hair;
And I'd wield no monarch's sceptre, nor share in his alarms,
For I'm Master of my Kingdom with my Baby in my arms;
The whole of Heaven is compassed by the Baby in my arms.

TWO MOTHERS

Is it mourning that ye are, dear, because safe in His keeping
The Good Lord has your baby, (and your heart is sair with
grief?)

O dry your tears, and thank His love that your little lad is sleeping
Tonight within His tender care, and his stay on earth was
brief!

He was little when God called him, and his baby lips were clinging
To your breast, the day he left you to answer to the call;
But you have the sweet remembrance of that joy, and time is
bringing

You each day just so much nearer to the Home that waits us all.

He was little when he left you—and he had not time for sinning;
He was pure, and sweet, and little, and your arms could hold
him fast;

And the Life he's living Yonder is only the beginning
Of the time you'll be together, when your journey here is past.

He was little when he left you, and your arms are aching for him,
But he knows not sin nor sorrow—and for that your heart
should joy;

And to think that up in Heaven God's angels have charge o'er him!
O! it's thankful you should be dear, not to *lose* your little boy.

He was little when he left you—had he stayed (ah, cease your
weeping)

You might know the bitter longing that comes tonight to one
Whose Mother-heart is burdened with a cry that, never sleeping,
Asks where *her* boy is biding at the setting of the sun.

MOTHERS' DAY

Alone in the gathering gloom they sit,
While thru Memory's halls wee forms still flit,
(Two Mothers old and gray;)

And over each wrinkled face there glows
A color faint as the palest rose,

And listen to what they say:

"O, but he was bonny that lad o' mine,
Like the blue o' the sea did his clear eyes shine,
And where is he today?"

"And sweet as a flower was my Lassie too,
But the eyes o' her were brown, not blue,

And she too, is far away;

Too far to remember her Mother here,
Her Mother who lived for her, year by year,
Who never left *her* alone";

And the faded eyes fill with a blur of tears
As down the passage of by-gone years
Are Memory's pictures shown.

"My Lad's a man—but he's far away—
And of course is too busy to send today
A word to let me know
That he's thinking o' me, who never forgot
To bend at night above his cot";
(And the old voice falters slow).

"Well—that's what Mothers are for, I ween,
But, O, if the green grass grew between
Us, and the place where they lay,
We'd not be so lone, nor our hearts so sair
As we are on this May day, bright and fair,
That they tell us is Mother's Day."

GOD'S GIFT

Dear Heart—you "wonder" why I "love you so"?
What does it matter if we never know
The *reason* for our friendship and our love?

What does it matter where we met or how
What means so much to us just here and now
Came to us? that its birthplace was above

This earth we know; for all of grace or good
That strengthens us (if we but understood)
We could trace clearly to that one true Source;

Just let us take the Blessing—and be glad!
I like to think when days look dark and sad
Of YOU—and say—"why God sent *Her*, of course."

WHAT A LETTER WILL DO

It's wonderful what a letter will do,
If it's from someone you love, and who also loves you;
It carries the blackest storm-clouds away,
(The kind that come on at the end of the day,
When you're tired and lonely, and homesick and blue—
And feel that the world holds no corner for you);
Then in comes the mail—with a letter from one
Whom you thought had forgotten; perhaps it's a son,
Or maybe a daughter, or friend true and tried,
And the world is no longer so terribly wide.

O—it's wonderful what a letter will bring
Of sunshine and gladness—like flowers in Spring,
If it comes from someone you love, who loves you,
There's no end to the good that a Letter can do.

COMPARISON

Are you down in the mouth—and your luck is bad—
And you haven't a cent to your name,
And you're hungry and cold, and tired and sad—
And life seems a losing game?
Just take this comfort home to your heart—
(You'll find it perfectly true—)
However sharp misfortune's dart
There are *others* worse off than *you*.

There's never a fate but it might be worse
However hard to bear;
And sorrow is oft the kindly nurse
Who weans us from despair;
And tho' your lot seems bitterly sad
From your own small point of view—
Remember—in spite of the trouble you've had—
There are *others* worse off than *you*.

There's never a day but the night shall come,
Nor a night but there follows the day;
And it matters not where the wind is from
If it carry the clouds away;
And could you have an enchanted steed
And wander the wide world through,
You'd find—however sore your need—
There are *others* worse off than *you*.

So try and make the best of your lot
(However hard it may seem)
There's none so poor but a resting spot
Is his when done life's dream;
And tho' it may seem you're sore beset
And your blessings are far and few—
Be thankful still—and never forget
There are *others* worse off than *you*.

THE ROBIN'S MESSAGE

The morn was chill, and my heart was weary,
For Faith was shattered and Hope had fled,
And life, at best, looked dark and dreary,
And the Love I had valued lay cold and dead;
Then outside my window, a song so cheery
That, in spite of myself, I listened—said
"Cheer up, cheer up, cheer up, dearie; dearie, cheer up, cheer up,"
it said.

It seemed like mocking my heart so saddened—
(When the love I had trusted had proved untrue

And the eyes whose light so long had gladdened
My heart, were no longer the eyes I knew),
And my soul with bitter distrust was maddened;
But still there came, from out the blue—
“Cheer up, cheer up, cheer up, dearie; cheer up, dearie,” and then
I *knew*;
Knew that the pain and grief were only,
Passing shadows from out the skies,
Knew that the reason my heart was lonely
Was because of unfaith in the Truth that lies
Ever around us, if we but only hold to the Good that we say we
prize,
And the Song of the Bird—“O, cheer up, dearie, cheer up, dearie,”
unsealed my eyes;

For it told me that out in the world was ringing
Brightness and cheer, and gladness yet,
And the gloom and sorrow my mood was bringing
’Twere better far I should soon forget,
And the Message that down thru the air came singing
(Dispelling sadness and vain regret)
Said “To cheer up, cheer up, cheer up, dearie” is nearer the Truth
than to mope and fret.

THE HOUSE UPON THE HILL

In the City—where the people live in dwellings near the sky—
And taught but brick and mortar meet the weary, home-sick eye,
They know nothing of the beauty that my heart with joy would fill
Could I find myself, tomorrow, in the House upon the Hill.

It is just a little dwelling, but the skies arch everywhere
In a way the City knows not, with its crowded thoroughfare;
And the katydids and crickets are never, never still,
You hear them till you slumber, in the House upon the Hill.

If I had a Wishing Carpet, (like we used to read about
In our childhood days of dreaming that was never tinged with
doubt),
I would say—“Please take me quickly to the place where pulses
thrill
With the glory of the sunsets near the House upon the Hill.”

And there’s trees and vines, and bushes, and the air is keen and fine,
(better tonic surely, than medicine or wine);
And my heart is sick with longing that will not be cured until
I am once more with my loved ones, in the House upon the Hill.

VALUES

What does it matter who did the deed,
So long as the deed was done?
What does it matter who ran the race
So long as the race was run?

What does it matter who sang the song
If only the song is sung?
And why should the winner be proud of himself
Be he old in years or young?

The one who ran—and did not win—
Did he not do his best?
If he ran to the measure of his strength
What matters all the rest?

If the song was sweet and helped a soul
What matters the singer's name?
The worth was in the Song itself—
And not in the world's acclaim.

O Heart bowed down with ~~sins~~ of loss.
Because ye did not win—
If you did your best (I say your *best*)
You, too, have "entered in";

The Song—the Race—the Deed are one—
If all be done for Love—
Love of the Work (not love of self)
And the score is kept Above.

SONNET

If you could read my heart—friend of my soul—
And know the depth of Love I feel for you,
(Than which no love could be more pure and true,
For in it passion has no sense control,
But it is quiet, sane, and strong and whole,)
You would not doubt aught I might say or do.

For did you read my *heart*, the Power that drew
Us to each other, would unfold the scroll
Of Truth; and lettered there, your spirit's eyes
Would see, (all unobscured by earthborn pride),
The story of the wealth of love that lies
There, waiting for your smile, though oft denied
The solace of your faith; (the sacrifice
Which *self* must make, would it in love abide).

SUNSHINE

What's the use of crying over milk that's spilled?
What's the use of grieving over blossoms killed
By the frost of winter? As the seasons flit,
Take fresh courage, brother—Smile a little bit.

More milk for the asking, Spring will come again,
And the blossoms withered, after healing rain,
Will return to cheer you, if your heart be lit
With the flame of Sunshine—so Smile a little bit.

If there were no rainstorms, flowers could not grow,
And they seem the brighter after winter's snow;
But the thing that makes them with God's glory lit,
Is His blessed Sunshine—so Smile a little bit.

When a Baby smiling, looks into your eyes,
Don't you feel a Glory straight from Heaven's skies
Chase away the shadows where you sometimes sit
When you're in the doldrums?—Smile a little bit.

Answer Baby's message, the spirit sent;
You will find a blessing tears have never lent
To your life's unfoldment if your heart is fit
For a Baby's friendship—so Smile a little bit.

Smiles are the reflection of the Soul within—
Are the "touch of nature" that makes the whole world 'kin
When by bitter sorrow you are sharply hit
Take fresh courage, brother—Smile a little bit.

Worry will not help you to make good your loss;
Into every earth, life shadows of the Cross
Must fall slanting sometimes, just to make us fit
To help with others burdens, so Smile a little bit.

It will pay to cultivate smiling in your soul,
And the art is always within your own control;
Just a little practice soon will make you fit
To take a course in Sunshine—Smile a little bit.

Smiling at the shadows will chase away the gloom—
As the glorious Sunshine brightens every room
When the windows opened, all the house is lit
With a breath of Heaven—so Smile a little bit.

A BIRTHDAY WISH

I would I could write for you something that's new!
(A wish for your birthday none other has said);
That should voice what I feel in language that's true,
In words that when written are worth being read;

But I find that my pen will not answer my thought
In lines that are graceful, or phrase that is new,
And so I just send you the wish that, unsought,
Comes *always* to mind when I'm thinking of *you*.

Be life what it may, skies golden or gray,
God bless you on this, and on every day!

TO H. H. A.

If all thy kindly deeds and helpful words
Were given life, like sweet-voiced singing birds
Their music should around thy pathway rise.
They live in many a heart, and who shall say
That when for *thee* shall dawn the eternal Day,
They shall not bear thee into Paradise?

LOVE

They prate of "love," who never felt its power;
And call the sickly passion of an hour
By God's pure name of Love.

Love is the guerdon of the Soul's desire;
Love is a spark of the Celestial fire
Sent down from Heaven above;

Love is the gift bestowed on men by Him
Who never meant its radiance to grow dim
Thro' unbelief or sin;

The Light which each may give his fellow-man,
Which shone on earth since e'er the world began,
And ever is within
Each human soul, to help it on the way
Which leads at last to the Eternal Day.

And when we find our place in Heaven above
We'll know its meaning there, for "GOD is LOVE."

WHAT IS A FRIEND

A friend—what is a friend? A friend is one who cares
If we are sad or glad; who dares
Contumely for our sake, and shares
Alike, through good or ill report, our fortunes to the end.

A friend—what is a friend? A friend is one who understands
When others fail; who holds our hands,
And keeps from slipping on Life's sands
Our weary feet, that still must journey on till life shall end.

A friend—what is a friend? A friend is one whose love
Is for ourselves—our faults above; who clings
To us no matter what Fate brings—
And despite failure sees in us the things
Alone which won his love; and whom no storm of life can bend.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

Oh! for the days that we spent in the wild-wood
Plucking the blossoms which grew at our feet;
Oh! for the Faith, the clear Faith of our Childhood,
Simple, and pure, and surpassingly sweet;
Oh! for the innocent Love, and the hoping
That all which we dreamed of was surely to be;
Then were the days when our souls were not groping
After strange gods, whom we vainly would see.

Then were the days when our spirits were leaping
Onward to meet what we felt to be true,
Then were the days when our young hearts were keeping
Tryst with the Faith which was all that we knew.
Never a shadow to darken its splendor,
Never a thought of our profit or loss,
Love was our anchor, and Joy our defender,
And the Light that we steered for, the Sign of the Cross.

Never a doubt then to mar our believing,
Never a yearning for knowledge and pain!
Always a Solace to quiet our grieving,
Oh! for the days that shall come not again.
False are the mists that our vision are blinding,
False are the voices that bid us to roam;
Upward and onward the Road is still winding,
And the Sign of the Cross marks the pathway to Home.

Gone are the innocent days of our childhood,
Simple and pure, and surpassingly sweet.
But still there is left us a path in the wild-wood,
Still are the flowers a-bloom at our feet;
Still there is Love to be had for the taking,
Still shines the Light that shall save us from loss
If Faith be our Guide, and the shadows are breaking
For see: in the Harbor—the Sign of the Cross!

A GOLDEN WEDDING

A Golden Wedding! and a Golden Day
Has come, to greet those travelers on Life's way
Who have, for fifty years, together trod
Its pathway, which was sometimes rough and steep,
But never yet so hard that it could keep
Them back from that straight Road that leads to God.

A Golden Wedding: ay, and Golden Years
Are those which lie behind, in spite of tears
And pain and sorrow, (which must come to all;)
And Golden is the Way which lies before
And leads from earth to that Eternal shore
Where all is Light, and never shadows fall.

O Light divine! the wondrous Light which brings
A Glory to the least of earthly things;
When we shall reach that Home of Peace above
Then shall we find the sun which makes our day
Is but the Power that kept our earthly way;
The Golden Light of God's transfiguring Love!

THE RAINBOW'S END

I've been thinking of a story
That we loved in childhood's days,
When the world was full of glory
And our hearts were full of praise,
And we never tired of hearing
(And the tale grew never old)
Of the rainbow's disappearing,
And the wondrous pot of gold.

Then we'd look with eager longing
Toward the far and golden West,
While such visions came a-thronging
As would thrill each childish breast
When our fancy tried to measure
To the goal our hopes had set,
For we knew we'd find the treasure
Where the earth and heaven met.

So we journeyed oft, aspiring
Just to find the rainbow's end,
Till our childish strength o'ertiring,
Weary steps we'd homeward bend;
But in spite of all endeavor,
Bitter tears and vain regret,
Tried we e'er so hard, we never
Reached where earth and heaven met.

Then, as childhood's days receding
Brought us soon to man's estate,
Felt we sure we now were speeding
Fast toward Fortune's golden gate;
So with all the old-time ardor
Pushed we on the quest, and yet
Found each day the journey harder
To where earth and heaven met.

So the treasure, disappearing,
Still beyond the rainbow lies,
But our journey, now, is nearing
To its end beyond the skies
Where our vanished youth shall find us,
And shall guide our weary feet
Till we close the gate behind us
Where the earth and heaven meet.

FLOWERS

When God had willed the world to be,
Had set the seasons and the hours;
Well pleased His goodly work to see
He smiled, and lo! there bloomed the Flowers!

ARBUTUS

With a tinge of the Rose, and the joy of the morning,
Fragrant and pure as the breath of the dawn,
Torn from the earth, where its beauty adorning
Made sweetness and light, to the City it's gone

Carrying with it a song and a story;
A Song of the Springtime—a story of Life—
Bearing a glimpse of the wonderful glory
Of Nature, its message with promise is rife.

Someway its fragrance reminds we of you, dear,
(Hiding its sweetness under the moss;)
You with a heart so tender and true, dear,
Smiling, in spite of sorrow and loss;

Like the Arbutus, you hide all your sweetness,
(Waiting till someone shall find out your worth,)
Ah! in a world of sad incompleteness
'Tis good that Arbutus inhabits the earth!

VIOLETS

Violets blue as the summer sky,
(Yet with a tint that is all thine own,)
How came ye here on the earth to lie—
Ye who must once have in Heaven shone?

“Up from the mold we have pushed our way
To gladden the heart of a little Child;
God sent us here, and bade us say
To all who search in the woodland wild,

“See what belongs to my children dear,
Foretaste of Heaven, with joys untold”:
Violets blue have come to cheer
The heart of the World, after winter's cold.

THE PANSY

Who said O Flower so wondrous fair:
That fragrance is not thine?
A subtle perfume fills the air,
That seems to banish grief and care
And Love and Faith combine.

I think thy sweetness comes from this,
That thou of Thought the emblem art,
And Faith and Love we shall not miss,
(Perhaps shall taste of Heaven's bliss,)
If thoughts like thee dwell in each heart.

GOLDEN ROD

Shining from the hedge-rows, gleaming from the grass—
Making all the landscape brighter as we pass—
Cheering all who see it, like a smile of God—
Summer's Benediction—beauteous Golden-Rod!

THE WATER LILY

Up from the depths of the river-bed
Groweth the water-lily white,
Ever lifting its lovely head,
Its petals of snow and heart of gold
(That a glimpse of God's sunlight seems to hold)
Up to the light.

The lily grows through the river-mould
With spotless petals, pure and white,
And no stain is there on its heart of gold;
Thou, too, O Soul, if thou wilt, may grow
To the heights above (from the depths below)
Up to The Light.

MY NATIVE LAND

My Native Land! when e'er I hear a kindly word in praise of Thee
'Tis music to my heart more dear than earth's most raptured
melody.

My heart leaps over time and space, and once again I seem to stand
Back in mine own familiar place—my life's true home—
My Native Land.

My Native Land! what raptures swell my heart, when of thy
children dear

I, doomed apart from Thee to dwell, their praises sung may often
hear.

What matter tho' afar I roam, a stranger on an alien strand?
Within my Soul thy name spells "Home! mine ain countree,"
My Native Land.

For neither time nor space can break the ties that bind me fast
to Thee—

That, if I sleep, or when I wake, are bonds from which I would
not free

My heart, while Memory can give the purest joys I understand.
I would not longer care to *live*—could I forget
My Native Land!

WINGS

A flash of wings against a sun-lit sky!
A burst of music from a wood near by!
And in a weary human heart, a cry
For better things.

"O birds that fly above in heaven's blue,
What know ye of life's bitterness and rue?
We too might sing along our way like you
If we had wings."

No answer from the thicket save a song!
But in the heart a Voice—"O, soul be strong
To do thy part; to thy way doth belong
Earth's lowlier things;

The birds that fly above thee have their place.
Canst thou not tread thy path with equal grace,
And daily offer up *thy* thankful praise
Without the wings?"

CANADA'S EMBLEM

O, Scotland has her Thistle—and England has the Rose—
(’Tis for the Queen of Nations the Queen of flowers blows)
And Ireland owns the Shamrock green—like her own fair Isle of
emerald sheen.

And Canada—whose children claim kinship with them all—
Is loyal to the Nation whom each their “Mother” call;
But she has chosen for her own an emblem fit for her alone.

And here the crimson splendor of the Royal Rose is seen,
Blent with the Shamrock’s emerald, and the Thistle’s silvery sheen;
And, not content all these to hold, she adds a touch of purest gold.

The Shamrock, Rose and Thistle each in its Land is chief.
But Canada holds dearest her own bright Maple Leaf;
For frosts that would their glory blight, but make its beauty
gleam more bright.

And as the triple colors she blends with touch of gold,
So for the Mother Country Canadian hearts aye hold
A Three-fold Love that naught can chill, but frosts of Time make
brighter still.

And hardy as the Thistle—and glowing as the Rose—
And ever-living as the green of Ireland’s Shamrock shows—
The Maple-Leaf its own shall hold in Loyal hearts of purest Gold.

A WOMAN OF THE STREET

“Is it nothing to you—O all Ye who Pass by?”

“She’s just a woman of the street” you coldly say;
And *why* is she a “woman of the street,” I pray?
How many of YOU—(happy and protected wives),
Have ever left your sheltered, comfortable lives,
To make, from day to day, a safer, surer way
For her, the alien “woman of the street?”

And you O man! whose *brother’s* sin has laid the blame
The suffering, and unequal share of bitter shame
Upon her shadowed life, have YOU no bill to meet?
No debt that you should pay, no *right* to clear the way
For her, your outcast sister “of the street?”

For that she *is* your sister—you cannot deny.
And, when at last, you both shall stand on high
Before that “Perfect Man,” (whom ye shall surely meet)
What think you He will say? what price ask *you* to pay
Because there are so many “Women of the street?”

TO C. H. J.

A hand of steel in a velvet glove (when the battle's for the Right).
A great heart filled with Mother-love and a keen and true insight.
A Queenly presence fit for one on a Heaven-born Mission sent.
God grant her strength till the race is run—God grant her peace
when her work is done—
God Bless our President!

THE FACES IN A CROWD

When you're noticing the glory of the coming of the Spring,
And the beauty of the colors of the Blue-bird on the wing,
And the green of trees and bushes—and the Robin singing loud—
Do you never stop to wonder at the Faces in a Crowd?

Nature is a marvelous pageant to the man with seeing eyes,
Viewing through his Spirit's windows all the magic of the skies,
All the tints on field and meadow, as he stands with Faith avowed
In his Maker, but if he will watch the Faces in a Crowd

He will find a scene more wondrous, as his seeing eyes behold
All the grades of Light and Shadow which will gradually unfold
To his vision, when his heart in humble fellowship is bowed,
And he reads between the lines of the Faces in a Crowd.

For the faces are a picture of what each has taken in—
Kept—or passed on—or rejected—and the virtue and the sin
Of each Life is there recorded, as with inner sight endowed
He, whose Soul has been awakened, sees the Faces in a Crowd.

O the grades of Light and Darkness! O the Gold and coarsest dross!
O, the striving after power—and the bearing of the Cross!
All are there for our instruction, as with reverence heads are bowed
And we each behold our *likeness* in the Faces in a Crowd.

IN MEMORIAM

When those we love are dead, we treasure e'en the garments that
they wore,

(The outgrown garments they will need no more)

And tell with tender thought the *words* they said,
When the pale, silent lips are cold and chill,
And never more 'neath our caress shall thrill—
And that we called "our own" lies still and dead.

Had we but told in *life* the things we say
In our heart-breaking grief above the clay

That heeds us not, nor answers to our cry;
How the tired heart had thrilled against our own,
And the dear eyes with love and joy had shone,
Because we set a star in life's dark sky!

Why need we wait until the door is shut, and night
Descends upon us, e'er we speak or write
The words, that said, would make life one glad song?
O, tell it now, the love thou keepest hid!
Save not thy roses for the coffin lid,
But give them *now*; do not delay too long.

Life is so short at best, a feeble spark
Alight for a brief while, and then the dark
Comes down! Yet, is there always time to say
The words that mean more than we ever know,
The words that make the flowers of joy to grow
Upon the weary road of life's highway.

O, do not wait until the day is o'er,
Until the Unseen Hand has shut the door
Between thee and the ones thou holdest dear!
Say what is in thine heart, and say it *soon*;
So shall Life's winter be as golden June,
And Heaven shall not be far away, but *near*.

MEMORIAL DAY

I write in memory of one who died not on the tented field,
Who bore no arms of sword or gun—wore no protecting shield;
And yet no warrior in the strife could be more deeply scarred than
he,
He battled on the Field of Life—and won the victory.
Pride—greed—injustice—falsehood—wrong—*these* enemies he oft
had slain,
And how to suffer, and be strong, he had not learned in vain.
He fought for Justice and for Right (no thought of self e'er came
between,)
And now he sleeps where falls the Light, in quiet field of green.
And while we deck those heroes' graves who, for their country's
honor gave
Their lives—then, too, the banner waves above my *father's* grave.

AT EVENTIDE

Oh, the day had been dark, but at eventide
The sun broke through the gloom,
And its light transformed and glorified
My humble cottage room,
And forgot were the clouds that had dimmed the day
When the evening light rolled the mists away.
Has life's day been dark, have the clouds hung low,
And strength and courage failed?
Take comfort, heart! 'Twere better so
Than the evening light had paled.
What matter tho' life be unglorified
If the Light be thine at eventide?

WHY?

Why, when death enters our portals, ending the pain and the strife,
The sins and the sorrows of mortals, and all that makes what we call "Life,"

Why shrink we aghast as from danger—from something that's new and unknown?

Why call we kind Death "a harsh stranger, who robs us of what was our own?"

Know we not, from the lessons of ages, that *nothing* we have is our own?

That Life is a Book, and its pages are turned by its Maker alone?

That Life is a Stage—and the curtain is dropped at the time that He saith?

And the *one thing* of which we are *certain* is the Mystery mortals call "Death"?

MY NEIGHBOR'S WINDOW-PANE

As I sat beside my casement,
One cheery Autumn day,
I glanced across at the windows
Of my neighbor over the way;
And, although the sun was shining,
I thought them strangely dim—
It seemed that my neighbor's windows
Were blurred, and dark and grim;
So I passed a hasty judgment
As I saw each spot and stain
Offending my eye so sorely
On my *Neighbor's* window pane.

Then I thought with calm complaisance
Of my *own* untarnished glass,
And closer bent to scan it,
When a strange thing came to pass;
For now my nearer vision
Found many an ugly stain,
But they rested on MY window—
And not on my neighbor's pane.

And when MY glass was brightened
How my *neighbor's* windows shone
When the sunlight danced upon them
As well as on my own;
While my heart took home the lesson,
That was sent not all in vain
If I look but through glass that is spotless
At my Neighbor's window pane.

IT IS NOT FAR

There is no "death"—'tis but a little way—it is not far
Unto that land of perfect Day, where our Beloved are;
And He who came to earth to show us how to reach it thru His
birth,

Is waiting for us now.

And with Him stand Our Own in garments white.
To their full stature grown in radiant Light.
There is no death—'tis but a little way—it is not far
Unto that land of perfect Day—where our Beloved are.

We lay us down at night to sleep in quiet rest;
Shall He who watches o'er us here, fail *there* to keep those we love
best?

Because our earthly vision does not *see* each well-loved face
Transfigured into beauty, more than we know how to trace,
It does not prove that they are gone away so *very* far;
There is NO death—no night—just Life and Day
Where our Beloved are.

LINES FOR A BLOTTER

Blot out the evil, let the good remain;
Keep but the joy, and blot out all the pain
The days gone by have brought.
Be every loving thought
And kindly deed, remembered not in vain.

Blot out all mem'ry of untruth or wrong;
Keep only that which serves to make thee strong;
Let grieving have no place;
To gird thee for life's race
No note discordant e'er should mar thy song.

Blot out all failures, but keep each success
To help thee on the road to Happiness.
Life needs not idle tears;
Let Hope thro' all the years
Be e'er thy beacon light, to guide and bless.

Blot out all bitterness that may prevent
Thy soul from harboring a sweet content;
So each unspoken thought
With Love and Faith inwrought,
Shall, written, prove a word from Heaven sent.

C. P. T.

One heart the less in this old world to love us—
One life the less to help our own;
One heart the more in the True Life above us—
One soul the more to its real stature grown.

When we shall pass beyond earth's narrow portal
And find that *Home* is after all, not far,
Our Brother will be waiting there—immortal,
To welcome us, when *we* shall cross the Bar.

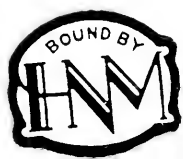
He does not need the printed page to praise him,
The *deeds* he did shall be his eulogy;
No monument that we could ever raise him
Would such a true and lasting record be.

He is not "dead," nor is he only sleeping,
But where stand ever wide the Golden Gates,
He, with the rest, his watch and ward is keeping,
In God's own land our Brother—LIVING—waits.

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